

Domestic Terrorism Endangers U.S.

U.S. Rep. Eldon Rudd of Arizona recently unloaded a slashing and well-deserved salvo at the proposed Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which would establish a special court in Washington to approve surveillance of known or suspected American agents of foreign governments or organizations.

He warned that the United States already is in great danger of domestic terrorism, similar to the terrorist acts in Italy and other foreign nations, and that domestic terrorism almost certainly would increase if the pending legislation is enacted thus further restricting law enforcement intelligence gathering activities.

The Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as other government investigatory bodies, have, undeniably, been guilty of past excesses in spying on American citizens. The abuses have been documented, even if not acknowledged. Yet a significant percentage of the domestic surveillance was more than justified: It occurred in times of crisis when agitators were threatening havoc, anarchy or worse.

Today, the dangers of terrorism have increased dramatically, with bombings, kidnappings, political assassinations and the senseless murders of innocent citizens altogether too commonplace throughout the world.

Foreign governments commonly harbor vicious terrorists, governments like Cuba, East Germany, Libya and others. Terrorists move freely from country to country, seemingly without difficulty, and striking without warning.

There are the terrorist members of the German Baader-Meinhof Gang who were recently sent into the United States via Canada, with one member of the organization arrested this month in Vermont. There is the Red Brigade in Italy, responsible for the murder of Aldo Moro and a score of political and business assassinations. There is the Japanese Red Army. In the United States, there are the Weather Underground, the Socialist Workers Party and a score of others, some of which involve only a handful of dangerous radicals.

They virtually are immune from traditional law enforcement investigatory techniques. Extraordinary police powers are entirely warranted in use against them. In fact, there is no convincing argument justifying a reluctance to use extraordinary police powers against them.

Rep. Rudd, in warning, said, "I can guarantee that if we keep silent, if knowing what we know we fail to act, the terrorists will triumph."

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act threatens to paralyze any meaningful effort to monitor radical activities. Without the ability to learn what politically-motivated terrorism by foreign—or even domestic—groups might result from their initiatives, this nation will be powerless to prevent the loss of innocent lives.

These are extraordinary times, and extraordinary police powers are essential to maintain order and to insure the public health, safety and welfare.

Congress must defeat the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

*File Elec
Surv.*